

- Community water fluoridation is an effective, safe, and inexpensive way to prevent tooth decay. This method of fluoride delivery benefits Americans of all ages and socioeconomic status
- Brushing twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste is an easy way to prevent tooth decay.
- Fluoridation, which was started in Grand Rapids, Michigan in 1945, has been used successfully in the United States for more than 50 years. It benefits both children and adults.
- Fluoride works by stopping or even reversing the decay process. It keeps tooth enamel strong and solid.
- Community water fluoridation is considered one of the great public health achievements of the 20th century.
- Of the 50 largest cities in the United States, 43 have community water fluoridation. Fluoridation reaches 62 percent of the population on public water supplies more than 144 million people.
- The annual cost of fluoridation is \$0.16 to \$1.03 per person for all but the smallest water systems.
 Even so, 100 million Americans do not have access to fluoridated water.

- Communities with fluoridated drinking water in the United States, Australia, Britain, Canada, Ireland, and New Zealand show striking reductions in tooth decay - those with fluoridated drinking systems have 15-40 percent less tooth decay.
- Nearly all tooth decay can be prevented when fluoridation is combined with dental sealants and other fluoride products, such as toothpaste.
- Fluoride dietary supplements can provide fluoride to those who do not have adequate levels in their drinking water. They are available as tablets, drops, or lozenges.
- Over-the-counter fluoride dental products such as toothpastes and mouth rinses are effective in preventing decay.
- Products with high concentrations of fluoride that are applied in the dental office or prescribed for home use offer additional protection for those at increased risk of tooth decay.
- Because older Americans are now keeping their teeth longer, fluoride will continue to be important for preventing tooth decay in this age group. Older Americans are especially susceptible to tooth decay because of exposed root surfaces and mouth dryness that may result from many medications.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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If you have questions or comments,

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